

# The TIPSTER

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Valdosta State University College of Education

*Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program*

*GSTEP Teacher Induction*

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## Partner to Partner

### *Valdosta State University Partners with the Cook County School System*

Cook County Schools is proud to be a part of the partnership with Valdosta State University. This relationship has provided many different opportunities for the first and second year teachers in the Cook County School System. Through this program, these teachers have been able to take part in workshops with well-known speakers on pertinent topics such as classroom discipline, how to teach children from poverty, and other experts in the field of education. These opportunities probably would not have been possible with the limited budgets that school systems now have.

Through this program, the first and second year teachers have been assigned a mentor to help them to become comfortable in their teaching experiences. These mentors may assist the teacher with how to handle "hard to deal with students," setting up schedules, teaching strategies, lesson plans, etc. Valdosta State University also provides personnel to go into the schools to assist these first and second year teachers in whatever way they are needed.

We know that these various experiences will make these teachers become more highly qualified in the position that they hold. This partnership with Valdosta State University is truly an asset to the Cook County School System.

Laura Hill  
Director of Federal/Special Programs  
Cook County School System



### *Valdosta State University Partners with Valdosta City School System*

**Every child is a promise. Every child is a possibility.** Because this is our belief, we find ourselves constantly challenged to provide the very best education possible no matter what the circumstance or difficulty. Education continues to play a large role in the lives of children, their families and the nation. Education in Valdosta City Schools is no different; we, too feel the urgency. Listed below are statistics taken from the Georgia Educator Workforce 2002 publication issued by the Professional Standards Commission that highlight the growth concerns in our state:

- "In FY02, 1,470,634 Pre-K - 12 students were enrolled in Georgia Public schools, 4,318 more than was projected for FY02."
- "In FY02, Georgia hired 13,084 new teachers, 8,303 of whom replaced teachers who exited the classroom."
- "Of the total new teacher hires, 32.5% came from outside Georgia, surpassing the PSC target of 30% for FY03."
- "If current growth continues, Georgia will employ more than 115,000 teachers in FY07 and more than 136,000 teachers in FY12."
- "Teacher demand engendered by student enrollment growth (which is influenced by live birth increases and migration into the state) and class size reduction will continue to be felt for the next 3-5 years."

(See VSU Partners, page 3)

## Growing through National Board Certification

Educators have many opportunities to grow and develop professionally. Many teachers continue their formal education through advanced degrees. Others attend conferences, read professional journals and participate in professional organizations. Still others learn through staff development workshops offered in their local schools or districts. All of these help teachers learn from others. Educators can also grow by examining their own teaching through recognized professional standards of practice. The National Board for Professional Teaching Practices was designed to help teachers do just that very thing. "The mission is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by: maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do, providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards, and advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification

in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers" (NBPTS, 1997).

Educators who have taught for three years, attained state certification (where required) and have a Bachelor's Degree in Education may apply to become National Board Certified Teachers. By participating in an extensive, year-long assessment of actual teaching, educators are examined based on their description, analysis and reflection of classroom teaching, student learning, student work samples, and documented accomplishments in their field. The state of Georgia offers incentives for National Board Certified teachers and is proud of the 805 NBCTs that teach in Georgia schools. Nationally there are 23,935 NBCTs improving PK-12 education with many more certifying each year. Valdosta State University through the Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) has supported over 50 teachers in their journey to become Board certified through pre-candidate course-



### Planting a Seed

work, small group mentoring, and conference attendance. Many of which may teach in your own school.

Know that your journey to grow into the best teacher you can be has just begun. Whether you elect to pursue an advanced degree, attend professional conferences, read literature on best practices, participate in staff development, or apply for National Board Certification—Valdosta State University is here to support your professional growth. After three years of teaching, we hope that you will choose to look at your practices through the process of National Board Certification.

For further information on the GSTEP supported NBPTS efforts at VSU, feel free to contact Julie Reffel (229) 333-5929 or access our website at <http://education.valdosta.edu/nbpts>. More information on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards can be found at <http://www.nbpts.org>. Best wishes in your growth.

Dr. Julie Reffel  
Acting Department Head, VSU Early Childhood & Reading Education  
National Board Certified Teacher

## 4th Annual Georgia Regional Service Learning Conference (Free Registration to the 1st 200 registrants)

On February 17, 2004 GSTEP and Georgia Learn and Serve will be co-hosting a conference at the Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center. The theme for this year's conference is "Service Learning Safari."

We are asking for presentations on academic service learning as a method to improve student achievement. We are seeking proposals that describe service learning projects that can be implemented in all academic areas and levels from kindergarten through college.

If you have any questions about the conference do not hesitate to contact **Cindy Musgrove at (229) 249-4918** or David Monetti at (229) 259-5079. You can find out additional information and register for the conference at: [www.teacherresourcebank.com](http://www.teacherresourcebank.com)

[www.teacherresourcebank.com/SL](http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/SL)

## TechnoInfo Corner

The TechnoInfo Corner is a place where new and unique technology information will be featured. This edition we will spotlight the construction of the Beginning Teacher Resource page. This new web page is a place on the Internet for beginning teachers to share their special web sites that they have found to be valuable as a beginning teacher.

It all started when a group of beginning teachers at Cook County School System had a web site, iKeepBookmarks.com, that they found to be very useful and shared it with Dr. Shirley Andrews, a VSU professor. Dr. Andrews sent the URL address from the Cook County School teachers with a note about how the teachers had shared the web site in Cook County and maybe other beginning teachers would like the information. I thought it might be helpful if beginning teachers had a web page in which they could share their special Internet sites and information. Dr. Andrews gave me a list of web sites that she had collected for beginning teachers, and that is how we started the Beginning Teacher Resource web page.

The Beginning Teacher Resource page is linked on the VSU Teacher Resource Bank and is located at <http://www.valdosta.edu/~djudd/beginningteacher.html>. Please share your special web sites with other beginning teachers in Cook County and Valdosta City School Systems. Send the name and URL of your special web sites that you would like to share to Dr. Diane Judd at: [djudd@valdosta.edu](mailto:djudd@valdosta.edu). Let me know if you would like me to list it with your name and school system. In addition, you could also add a sentence for other beginning teachers about ways the site is helpful to you.

Looking forward to your resources.

Dr. Diane Judd  
Early Childhood & Reading Education  
Chair, GSTEP Technology Committee



What lies behind us and what lies before us  
are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

**Can we afford to lose “good teachers”?**

The answer is, no, we cannot afford to lose good teachers. We must do our best to retain them. Therefore, it is becoming more and more a priority in Valdosta City Schools that new teachers are not only noticed but supported.

Prior to Valdosta City School’s collaboration with Valdosta State University’s GSTEP project, we diligently provided new teacher orientations for incoming teachers. However, as money and interest began to wane, we found ourselves lacking in support of new teachers. Within the past three to four years we have again begun to take necessary steps toward supporting new teachers. “Teachers helping teachers” is beginning to be the theme of our talk as we plan with mentor teachers in our support of new

teachers. We are laying the groundwork for new teacher induction in Valdosta City. Teachers, both TSS endorsed and Buddy Teachers, are looking at the vital role they play in increasing teacher retention through the encouraging support they contribute in the system’s mentoring program.



\* “I have had a lot of fun exchanging ideas and stories. We try everyday to find something to laugh about.”

M. Fitzgerald, High School

\* “My mentoring experience could be best described as, ‘Under construction.’ I am learning to mentor just as my protégé is learning the teaching profession.”

Debbie Paine, Middle Grades

\* “I have learned as much or more from my protégés as they learned from me.” D. Holt, Elementary

We realize this is only the beginning... we want to make giant strides in this effort. In our need to make new teacher induction a system concern, we have initiated a Mentor Teacher Leadership Team consisting of TSS endorsed and Buddy Teachers, and a New Teacher Induction Team.

Thus far, we have witnessed the participation of people who are enthusiastic and

**Special Points of Interest:**

- \* *Service Learning Safari Conference*  
February 17, 2004
- \* *Teaching & Learning Conference*  
February 21, 2004
- \* *ETTC Conference*  
May 11, 2004

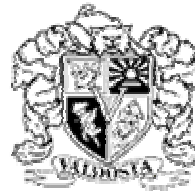
## The Principal’s Perspective

Each year, I have an opportunity to meet with all of the “first year” teachers prior to preplanning. I try to provide the new teachers with practical advice that will hopefully make their first year a successful one. Here are a few tips that I share with my teachers:

- ⇒ Do not be afraid to ask for help! You have a mentor for a reason.
- ⇒ Establish your classroom routines the first day.
- ⇒ Make an initial phone call to parents introducing yourself and welcoming their child to your class. Periodically

call about good things and parents will be more receptive to calls about bad things.

- ⇒ Not only firm, fair and consistent; be compassionate!
- ⇒ Take time to listen.
- ⇒ Utilize low-profile intervention as much as possible.
- ⇒ Maintain a professional and positive rapport with students, parents and peers.
- ⇒ Do not punish the masses for the misdeeds of a few.



- ⇒ Use your time wisely.
- ⇒ Good planning and effective teaching takes care of many discipline problems.
- ⇒ Read “The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher” by Harry Wong.

Congratulations on becoming a professional educator. I hope that your career will be long, prosperous, and rewarding.

## Notes from the GSTEP Director’s Desk

This year begins year 4 of the Georgia Systematic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP), a federally-funded program designed to provide support to teachers at various career stages. Partnering with VSU in this grant are Albany State University, The University of Georgia, P-12 partner schools, and selected state agencies. Over 100 P-12 and higher education faculty from across south Georgia are hard at work serving on committees that

are addressing various aspects of GSTEP. These facets include recruitment; pre-service teacher education; induction support for first and second year teachers; candidacy support for teachers seeking certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS); and an array of professional development opportunities for all educators, from the pre-school level through the college level (P-16).

To find out more about GSTEP, please feel free to contact me (phertzog@valdosta.edu) or contact the GSTEP Office at 229-249-4918. We welcome opportunities to share information about GSTEP and are always looking to recruit additional volunteers willing to assist us in our mission to support teacher development. Working collaboratively, we can have a positive impact on



## HOW WE TREAT PEOPLE:

Five Lessons to Help You Think About the Way We Treat Peo-

### Lesson One: The Cleaning Lady

During my second month of college our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions until I read the last one: "What is the name of the woman who cleans the school?"



Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50's, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Just before class ended one student asked if the question would count toward our quiz grade.

"Absolutely," said the professor. "In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say 'hello.'"

I never forgot that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

-Author Unknown

Stay tuned for lessons  
two, three, four and  
five!



### Greetings from the Editor

Welcome! I am excited to be able to share with you the latest edition of the TIPSTER Newsletter. As you may already know, I am a faculty member in the Middle Grades and Secondary Education Department at VSU. In addition, I began serving as chair of the GSTEP Induction committee in August 2003. As chair, my responsibilities include working with your school system induction coordinator to provide support and resources for you through your system's induction program. Also through GSTEP, I coordinate the VSU Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) program in which mentor's receive training so they can become better equipped to serve as mentors to new teachers, such as yourself, or student teachers.

Another responsibility is to publish the TIPSTER Newsletter. I have been working with Cindy Musgrove, GSTEP Accounting Assistant, to put together the information in this newsletter that hopefully will be useful for you as a beginning professional, as well as for the mentors and principals you work with. I want to thank Cindy for her valuable contribution in helping me get my first issue of the newsletter in publishable form.

I also wanted to take the opportunity to thank individuals who willingly gave their time to submit articles and information for this edition of the newsletter. For future issues of the newsletter we will be soliciting contributions from superintendents, principals/administrators, mentor teachers, beginning teachers and National Board Certified Teachers. We may be calling on you. In the meantime if you have something you would like to contribute to the newsletter or if there are other items of interest you would like to see included in the newsletter, please e-mail me at [spandrew@valdosta.edu](mailto:spandrew@valdosta.edu). I look forward to hearing from you!

Shirley Andrews, Editor  
Chair, GSTEP Induction Committee

### Did You Know?



- \* There is a new Dean of the College of Education at VSU. His name is Dr. Philip L. Gunter. Dr. Gunter formerly served as head of the Special Education and Communication Disorders Department at VSU and began serving in his new position in July 2003.
- \* The VSU College of Arts and Sciences and College of the Arts also have new deans. Dr. Linda T. Calendrillo became the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in July 2003. Before coming to VSU, she served as head of the English Department at Western Kentucky University. Dr. John Gaston, formerly acting dean of the College of the Arts and professor in the Communication Arts Department at VSU, is now serving as Dean of the College of the Arts.
- \* Dr. Brian Gerber is the new Associate Dean for the VSU College of Education. Dr. Gerber began serving in this capacity in July 2003. He was formerly an associate professor in the Department of Middle Grades and Secondary Education.
- \* The VSU College of Education now has a new Certification Officer. Dr. Donnie McGahee, former department head of Adult and Career Education at VSU, was appointed as the COE Certification Officer in July 2003, following the retirement of Dr. Earl Swank.
- \* This newsletter can be found online from a link on the Teacher Resource Bank web site: <http://www.teacherresourcebank.com>

### Congratulations, Teachers of the Year!!!!

Valdosta City School  
System Teacher of the  
Year 2003-2004

#### Cheryl Rice

Ms. Rice teaches second grade at S. L. Mason Elementary School and is a National Board Certified Teacher. She is also a Teacher Support Specialist (trained through VSU's Teacher Support Specialist Program) and is a graduate of Valdosta State University.

**GREAT  
JOB!!**



Cook County School  
System Teacher of the  
Year 2003-2004

#### Connie Smith

Ms. Smith teaches special education at Cook Elementary School. She is certified in Early Childhood and Ed Leadership and is currently serving as part-time Student Support Team Chair at Cook Elementary.

**GREAT  
JOB!!**

